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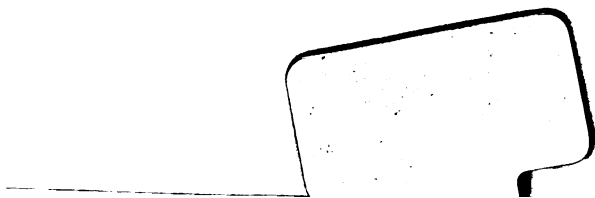
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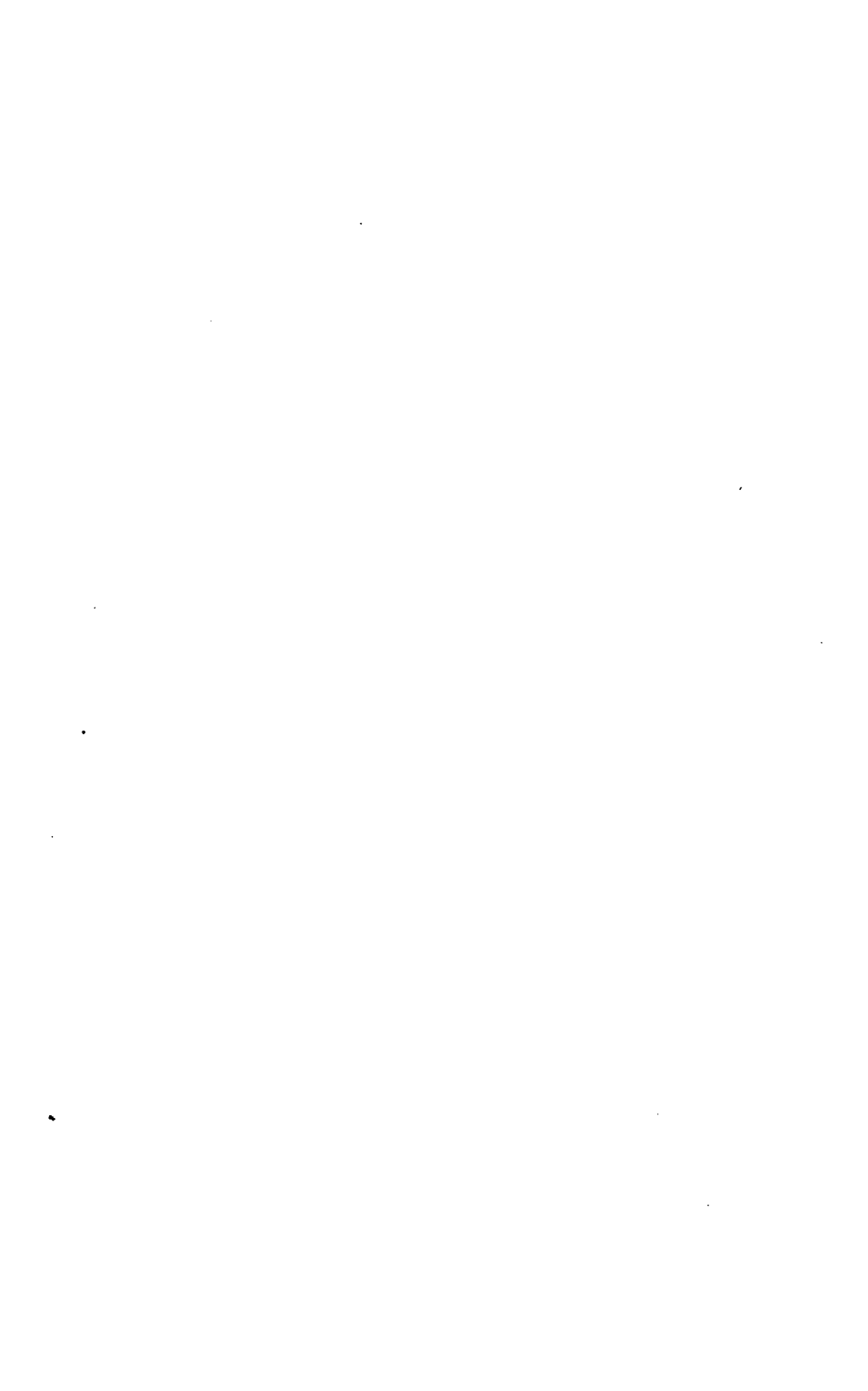
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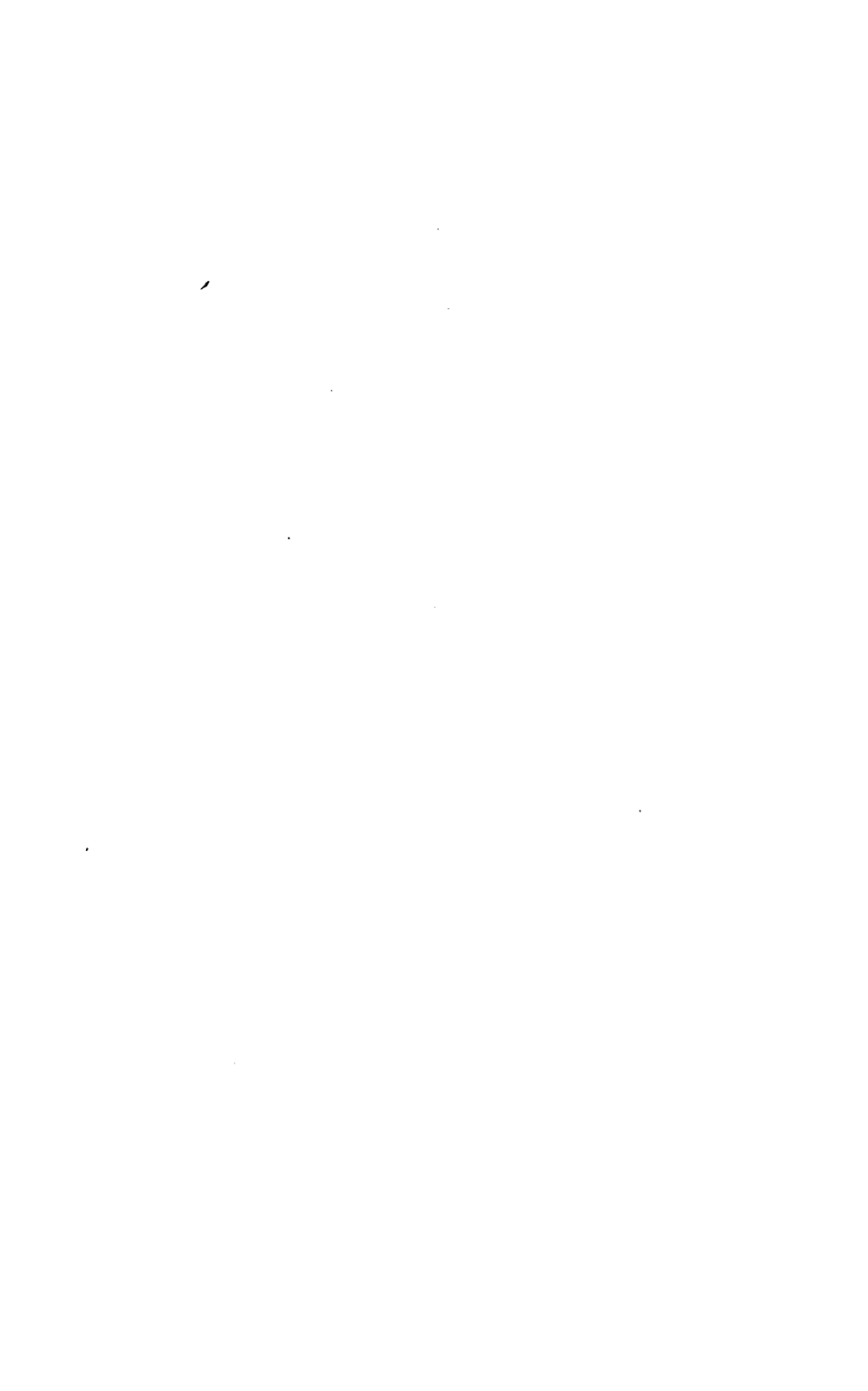
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LYRICS

FROM THE

GERMAN OF SCHILLER,

INCLUDING

THE SONG OF THE BELL,

AND OTHER CELEBRATED PIECES.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY J. PYM JOHNSTON, ESQ.

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CONTENTS.

THE COMBAT WITH THE DRAGON	- -	p. 3
THE DIVER	- - - - -	p. 17
THE MESSAGE TO THE FORGE	- - -	p. 25
THE SONG OF THE BELL	- - - -	p. 35
PEGASUS IN HARNESS	- - - - -	p. 51

THE COMBAT WITH THE DRAGON.

THE COMBAT WITH THE DRAGON.

A Romance.

I.

WHAT means that dense, tumultuous throng,
The crowded streets that rolls along?
Is Rhodes enveloped in a blaze?
A mass of people chokes the ways,
And o'er all others' heads I spy
A knight on charger mounted high;
And see! they drag, who can explain?
A hideous monster in his train;
In shape a dragon it would seem,
With crocodile's wide-opened jaws;
And all men's eyes alternate beam
On knight and dragon with applause.

II.

A thousand voices rend the sky,
Here is the reptile, see ! they cry,
Which made our flocks and herds to bleed ;
Behold the knight who did the deed.
Full many a one before him went,
Upon the adventurous errand bent,
But never came they back again ;
Honor the valiant hero then !
And to the convent straight, where all
The Hospitallers of Saint John
Have, at their Master's sudden call,
Been summoned, they now hasten on.

III.

And to the noble Master now
The youth advances, bending low ;
Behind him, on the steps, the crowd
Throng, with wild voices echoing loud ;
But he commenced his speech, and said :
" My knightly duty I have paid ;
The dragon which laid waste the land,
Lies killed by my victorious hand ;
Free to the traveller is the way,
The shepherd now may bask in peace ;
Now let the pilgrim joyful stray
Unhindered to the shrine of grace."

IV.

The Prince, with eye severe, replies :
" Thine action with a hero's vies ;
Courage adorns the knight, 'tis true ;
And boldness is your proper due.
But speak ! what is his first demand
Who fights in the Redeemer's band—

And wears the crosslet on his mail?
And all the assembled crowd grow pale."
But he, with noble self-command,
Bows lowly, blushing, and replies :
"Obedience is the first demand,
Which proves him worthy of the prize."

V.

"And this demand, my son," returned
The Master, "thou hast boldly spurned.
"The combat which the law declared
A crime, thy guilty rashness dared"—
"Sir, judge when you have heard the whole,"
The youth replied, with settled soul ;
"The law's intent and meaning still
It was my purpose to fulfil.
Not heedlessly did I go hence,
To meet the monster in his might ;
With art and deep intelligence,
I sought to conquer it in fight.

VI.

"Five of our Order had been slain,
Religion's ornaments ! in vain ;
Sad victims of courageous zeal—
The combat thou didst then repeal.
But in my heart the hot desire
To brave the monster, raged like fire ;
Oft in the silent dream of night
Did I seem panting in the fight ;
And when the morning dawned again,
And brought me fresh reports of woe,
A frenzied sorrow seized me then,
And I resolved to face the foe.

VII.

“ And to myself I thus began :
What honors youth, adorns a man ?
What did the valiant men of old,
Of whom in story we are told ?
Whom, in their gratitude and pride,
Blind Pagans often deified ;
They cleansed the world, in actions rare,
Of monsters such as dragons are ;
In combat even lions met,
And wrestled with the Minotaur,
Its victims to emancipate,
And scorned to think upon a scar.

VIII.

“ Are Saracens alone to feel
The temper of the Christian's steel ?
Is Mahomet the only foe
Whom he is sent to conquer ?—no ;
From every ill and every grief,
His potent arm must yield relief ;
But wisdom must his courage guide,
And stratagem 'gainst force be tried.
So did I ponder oft, and went
The reptile's traces to survey ;
A ray of light from Heaven was sent—
I cried out : I have found the way !

IX.

“ And with these words I came to thee :
My home and kindred I would see ;
To grant my prayer you kindly deigned,
My native shore was quickly gained,
And scarcely had I touched the strand,
When, by a skilful artist's hand,

A dragon's likeness rose to view,
To all the well-marked features true,
On four unequal feet was placed
The body's disproportioned length,
A scaly coat of mail embraced
The back, with formidable strength.

X.

"The long neck stretches out before,
And, black as some infernal door,
When gaping greedily for prey,
The jaws their hideous depth display.
All round the purple throat appear
The prickly teeth in many a tier;
The tongue is sharp as pointed blade;
The small eyes sparkle in the shade.
Into a serpent's shape decays
The back's enormous length, and roll'd
Around itself, that it may seize
Both horse and rider in its fold.

XI.

"Thus all with care I imitate,
And clothe it in a hue of slate;
Half brute it seemed, half reptile then,
Engendered in the poisonous fen;
And when the image was complete,
I chose a pair of blood-hounds fleet,
Sinewy, brawny, trained at length
To beard the wild bull in his strength;
These on the reptile I let loose,
To maddening rage their blood excite,
And of their strength to be profuse,
And charge them, by my voice, to bite.

XII.

“ And where the belly’s softer fleece
Advantage gave to bite with ease,
I urge them there to the attack,
There with their pointed fangs to hack.
Myself, with javelins armed for need,
Bestride my best Arabian steed,
Of noble race and high descent,
And as I rouse his mettle’s bent,
I spring him sudden on the foe
My spurs perform their duty too—
And haste my javelin to throw,
As if to pierce the dragon through.

XIII.

“ And though my horse at times may rear,
And champ the bit, and foam with fear,
And both my dogs impatient bay,
I rest not till they learn the way.
With perseverance thus I wait,
Till thrice the moon renews her state ;
And when their practice is complete,
I speed them here in pinnace fleet.
Thrice only has the sun gone round,
Since we this island’s coast have made ;
My wearied limbs no leisure found,
Till I the mighty debt had paid.

XIV.

“ For, as I came, my bosom bled
To hear the havoc lately made,
Of shepherds’ mangled corpses found,
Strewed by the monster on the ground ;
And I resolved the deed to brave,
My heart the only counsel gave.

My grooms I summon to my side,
My practised courser I bestride ;
And, by my noble pair of dogs
Accompanied, by secret way,
Where witness none my passage clogs,
I hasten to commence the fray.

XV.

"The little chapel, sir, you know,
Which on a rocky mountain's brow,
Whence all the island you descry,
The daring builder raised on high ;
Lowly it seems, despised and small,
But holds a miracle withal,
The Mother and the Babe divine,
With wise men kneeling round the shrine.
On three times thirty steps ascend
The pilgrims to the towering steep ;
But when the giddy height is gained,
The Saviour's presence gives relief.

XVI.

" Deep in the rock it stands upon,
A grotto's gloom excludes the sun,
Damp with the dew of neighbouring fen,
Where Heaven's light doth never shine ;
The reptile here in ambush lay,
Its prey expecting night and day :
So, like the Cerberus of the bard,
It seemed the chapel's foot to guard ;
And when anear this place of woe
The pilgrim's footsteps chanced to steal,
Sprang from his dark retreat the foe,
And dragg'd him to his dreadful meal.

XVII.

“ Now up the rock I took my way ;
Ere I began the dangerous fray,
Humbly I knelt before the shrine,
And cleansed from sin this heart of mine.
And with my polished armour then
I gird me in the holy fane ;
With spear my right hand I defend,
And straightway to the fight descend.
My grooms to follow I forbid —
 Their fears I beg them to control ;
And, vaulting quickly on my steed,
 To Heaven I commend my soul.

XVIII.

“ Scarce had I reached the open plain,
When to give tongue my dogs began,
And, terrified, my horse to rear,
And hesitate, and pant with fear ;
For near him, roll'd into a heap,
The hideous monster lay asleep,
In heat of noontide basking there—
The dogs soon roused him from his lair ;
But, swift as lightning, turn'd at last,
 As they its jaws wide open view'd,
While it sent forth a poisonous blast,
 And howling like the jackal stood.

XIX.

“ But soon their courage I renew,
And urge them to attack the foe ;
While with a mighty effort I
My javelin at his loins let fly ;
But, powerless, from the rocky hide
It fell rebounding by my side ;

And ere my cast I had renewed,
My frightened charger rearing stood,
And sprang recoiling from the look
Of basilisk, and poisoned breath,
And now the blood my cheek forsook,
And I seemed doomed to instant death.

XX.

“ But, with immediate self-command,
I spring to foot, and bare my brand ;
But no attempts of mine avail
To pierce the rocky coat of mail.
And, with a raging sweep, the foe
Has with its tail now laid me low ;
Its jaws already open wide,
I see its cruel fangs divide,
When to my aid my faithful hounds
Grappled the monster’s womb again ;
And so tormented it with wounds,
That it stood howling with the pain.

XXI.

“ And ere the brute could disengage
Its body from the blood-hounds’ rage,
I spy the monster’s weaker part,
And, plunging deep into his heart,
Up to the hilt my steel I bore.
Black wells the mighty stream of gore ;
Down sinks the great gigantic ball,
And buries me beneath its fall,
So that my senses quickly fly ;
And when, reviving, I look round,
I see my grooms both standing by,
And dead the dragon on the ground.”

XXII.

The approbation long suppressed,
Now burst from every hearer's breast,
Soon as the knight his speech had spoken;
And, tenfold on the arches broken,
The sounds of mingled voices rise
Re-echoing to the vaulted skies.
Loudly the Order's brethren claim
A wreath to crown the hero's fame;
The people, in triumphal show,
Demand that he be seen by all;
The Master gravely bends his brow,
And orders silence in the hall.

XXIII.

And speaks: "The dragon which this land
Laid waste, lies conquered by thy hand;—
The people deify thee now!
But to the Order thou'rt a foe;
And a worse reptile far was bred
Within thy heart, than this that's dead;
The serpent which the bosom fills
With poison, and the world with ills—
Is the rebellious will of man,
Which scorns the yoke of discipline;
And ever since the world began,
The ruin of its peace hath been.

XXIV.

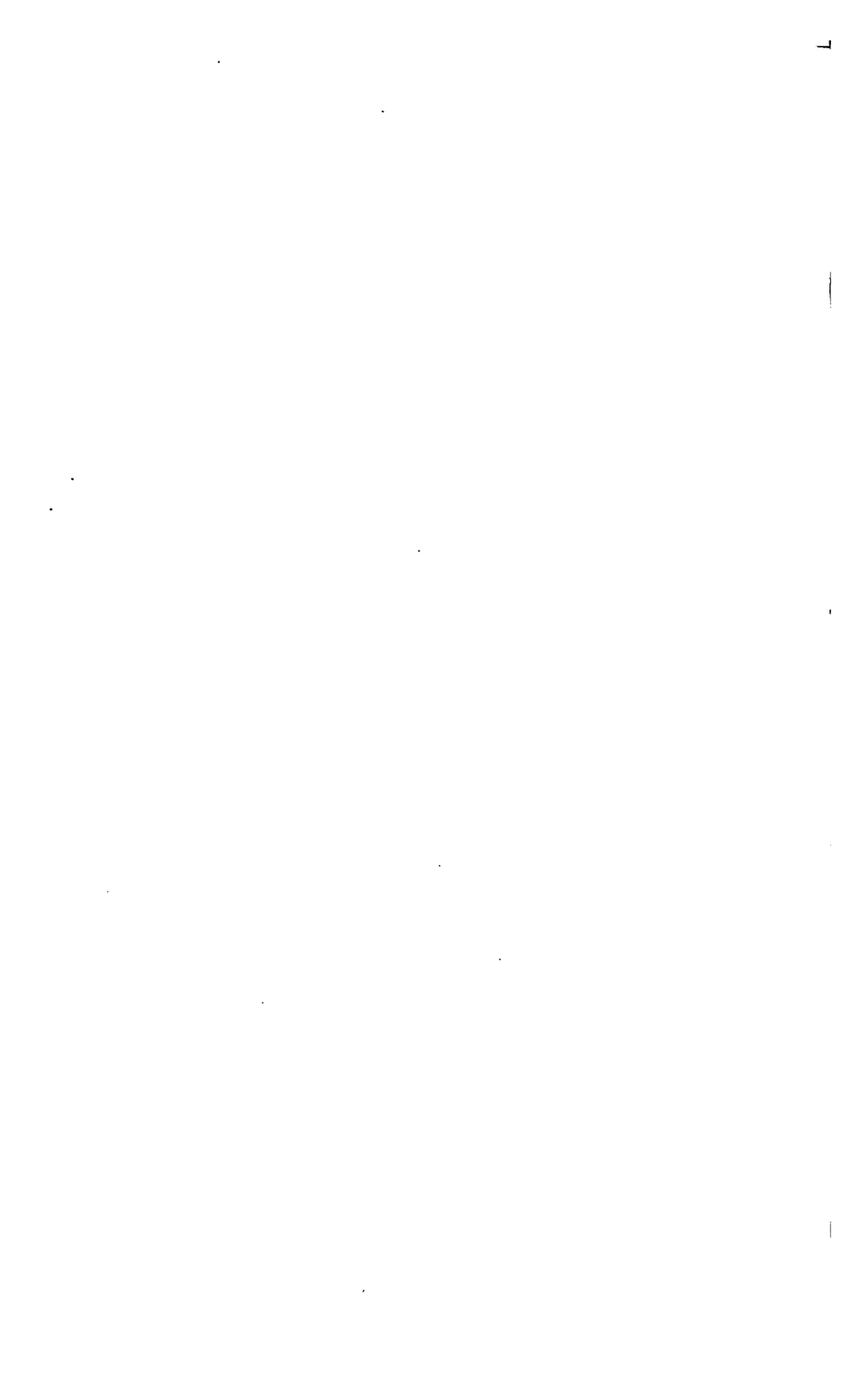
"Courage we meet in Paynim host,
Obedience is the Christian's boast;
For where the Master from on high
Once walked in deep humility,
The fathers there, on holy ground,
This Order's bond did wisely found—

Of duties hardest to fulfil,
To curb our own rebellious will.
Vain glory in thy bosom burned,
Then haste thee quickly from my sight!
He who the Master's yoke hath spurned,
May never with his cross be dight."

XXV.

Now forth the vast assemblage break,
A tempest seems the house to shake,
And all the brethren beg for grace.
The youth in silence bows his face,
Lays down his mantle with a tear,
Kisses the Master's hand severe,
And goes:—the latter's eyes pursue
The hero; he recalls him too—
"Come to my arms, my son," he cries,
"The harder victory's gained by thee.
Accept this cross—it is the prize
Of self-subdued humility."

THE DIVER.



THE DIVER.

A Ballad.

"WHO dares of my knights, or their squires so bold,
In this terrible gulf to dive ?
I cast from my hand a bright goblet of gold—
'Tis engulf'd ! now, whoever alive
Shall return from the deep with that goblet again,
May the precious gift for himself retain."

The king spoke the words, and cast from the height
Of that bare steep rock that stood
O'er the infinite ocean, a goblet bright,
In Charybdis' howling flood.
And again he exclaimed, "Who is here so brave,
As to dive for his king in this dark deep wave ?"

But the knights and the squires, as they stand around,
Hear the words, and all mute remain ;
And trembling they gaze on the dark profound—
And none cares the goblet to gain.
Now the king, for the third time, again demands :
"Is there none who will venture, of all my bands ?"

But still not an answer was heard aloud,
When a stripling, soft and bold,
Steps out from the midst of the daunted crowd,
And loosens his mantle's fold;
And the knights and the ladies all eager gaze
On that tender stripling in mute amaze.

And now, as he treads on the rocky shelf,
And intent on the gulf looks down,
The flood that beneath had entwined itself,
Charybdis throws back with a groan;
And e'en with the distant thunder's din,
The waves burst with white foam from the womb within.

Now hisses the flood, and foams, and boils,
As when water is mix'd with fire;
The spray spouts to Heaven, and endless toils
Wave on wave in succession dire;
Exhaustless, incessant, it seems as were
The ocean in labour an ocean to bear.

But at length the fierce storm of the waves is allay'd,
And, black where the white foam had been,
A deep-yawning chasm is now display'd,
Where no bottom is found, I ween!
And the dark pool sucks down, with resistless force,
The contending waves in its eddying course.

Oh quick! ere the torrent of foam returns,
One word, youth, to God now pray!
And from that scream of terror the list'ner learns
That the whirlpool has swept him away!
And mysterious close the devouring jaws
Of that gulf o'er the swimmer—a dreadful pause.

Now the surface is calm of that watery waste,
Deep, deep it continues to roll;
And around you hear anxiously whispered in haste :
“ Farewell, youth of noble soul !”
And deeper and deeper the din subsides,
Like the whistling storm when the tempest rides !

Oh king ! did you cast in the crown from your head,
And proclaim, “ Who restores it again,
He shall wear it thenceforth, and be king in my stead ”—
Dear reward ! thou shouldst tempt me in vain.
No happy soul, living, shall ever reveal
What the howl of these waters is doom'd to conceal.

Full many's the brave vessel, seized by the tide,
That has perish'd in that yawning grave ;
But keel and mast, shatter'd, alone ever ride
Again toss'd on the crest of that wave :—
Now clearer and clearer again you hear
The storm rushing nearer, and still more near.

Again hisses the flood, and foams, and boils,
As when water is mix'd with fire ;
The spray spouts to Heaven, and endless toils
Wave on wave in succession dire ;
And again, with the distant thunder's din,
The waves dash with white foam from the womb within.

And see ! from the ocean's dark bosom where now
A swan-white arm is espied ;
And a fair polish'd shoulder emerges to view,
And buffets with vigour the labouring tide.
'Tis the youth ! and triumphant he rears in his hand
The bright goblet, and waves it with joy to the land !

And long did he breathe, and deep did he sigh,
As he greeted the sun-light of day;
Glad shouted each voice of that throng to the sky,
While one to another they say:
"He lives! he is there! oh noble and brave!
He has rescued his life from the merciless wave."

And now, with glad escort advancing, behold
At the feet of the king where he falls;
On his knee he presents him the bright cup of gold,
And the king to his beautiful daughter calls,—
Rich wine to the brim in the goblet she pour'd,
And thus did the youth then unfold to his lord:—

"May the king live long!—Oh happy who breathe
In the rosy light above;
But horror dwells in the deep beneath,
And let man never tempt the Gods, to prove
What they in mercy from human eye
Have veiled in gloom and dread mystery.

"With lightning's speed I sank with the tide,
Till a cataract's gushing force
Burst from a cavern's rocky side,
And opposed my downward course;
And thus, in the twofold torrent bound,
Was I whirl'd, like a top, resistless round.

"Then God did show me, to whom my tongue
In this perilous moment cried,
Where a column of rock from the ocean sprung,—
I clasp'd it, and death defied!
And the cup was poised upon corals there,
It had else descended—I know not where—

“ For under me lay, yet mountain-deep,
 A purple darkness vast ;
And though to the ear these horrors sleep,
 My eye with terror was cast
On the snakes, salamanders, and dragons beneath,
As they swarm’d in the grisly pool of death.

“ Dark masses of hideous monsters there
 In horrible mixture lay ;—
The Hammer-fish, with its form of fear—
 The Rock-fish—and prickly Ray—
And the ravenous Shark all grimly smiled,
Hyena of the ocean wild !

“ Despairing I thought, as there I hung,
 How far from all human ken !
A single sentient soul among
 The shapes of that ocean den :
Deep under the reach of human sound,
With monsters of the drear profound.

“ And with horror I saw a creature near
 Move a hundred joints—and now
It darts at me ! all wild with fear,
 I abandon’d the coral bough ;—
Quick seized me the eddy, but not in vain,
For it bore me aloft to the light again ! ”

The king heard the tale with amazement sheer ;
 And said, “ The goblet is thine :
And this ring will I give thee—a pledge more dear—
 Adorn’d with the costliest gems that shine,
Wilt thou venture *again*, and discover to me
What thou find’st on the deep, deep bed of the sea.”

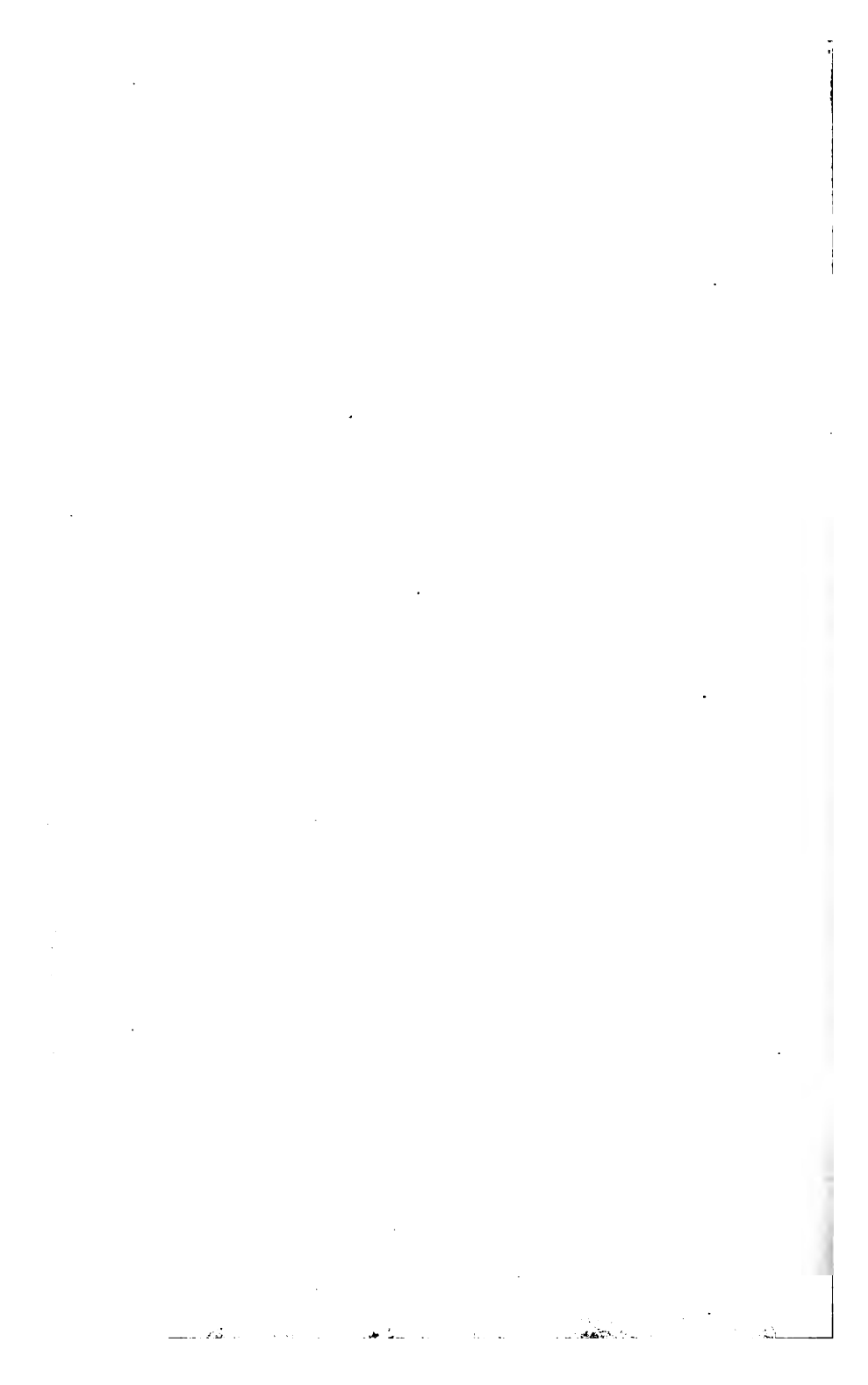
His daughter had listened, and soft was her aim,
As, with flattering lips, she cried :
“ Oh father, desist from this terrible game ;
He has done what none dared do beside ;
But, canst thou not conquer thy heart's desire,
Let some knight take the palm from the humble squire.

The king snatch'd the goblet, and rose from his seat,
As he hurl'd it in haste back again ;
And—“ Fetch but that goblet once more to my feet—
Thou shalt be the first knight in my train ;
And shalt marry the maiden this day, I decree,
Who now tenderly sues in compassion for thee.”

Then the soul of the youth seized an ardour sublime,
Bold flash'd the bright fire from his eyes ;—
He sees the fair form spread with blushes for him,
She grows pale—and senseless she lies ;—
No danger he dreads which shall *that* prize bestow,
And headlong he dashes, for weal or woe !

The roll of the waters is heard again,
That thunder proclaims their return—
All eagerly stoop, with fond eyes, o'er the main,
And again—all the waves back are borne ;
They rush up to the brink, they subside as before,
But no wave brings that youth back again to the shore.

THE MESSAGE TO THE FORGE.



THE MESSAGE TO THE FORGE.

A Ballad.

A GENTLE page was Fridolin,
Whose aim was still to earn
The approval of his mistress fair,
The Countess of Saverne;
She was so kind—she was so good—
But even caprice's harshest mood
To satisfy, he would have striven—
With gladness, for the sake of Heaven.

From early dawn till vespers toll'd,
At evening's setting sun,
He lived her gentle will to serve,—
Ne'er deem'd his task was done;
And if the lady mildly chid
His diligence, or toil forbid,
Tears threaten'd in his eye to start,
Lest in her service he had miss'd a part.

Therefore before the servants all
The countess him preferr'd,
And from her beauteous lips to fall
His hourly praise was heard ;
No menial page to her he seem'd ;
His heart a filial interest claim'd,
And oft her clear eye hung with joy
Upon the comely features of the boy.

For this, in huntsman Robert's breast
Black hatred held control,
For love of mischief long had lurk'd
Within his envious soul ;
And to the count, of fiery mood,
Once home as from the chace they rode,
He whisper'd, and full craftily
Strew'd in his heart the seeds of jealousy.

" How blest, my lord," he thus began,
" 'Bove other men art thou !
Doubt's poison'd fangs can never scare
Sweet slumber from your brow ;
For you possess a noble wife,
Fair chastity adorns her life ;
The baffled tempter ne'er shall boast
Her virtue or her honour lost."

Then fiercely glared the count's dark eye,
" What, fellow ! tell'st thou me ?
Shall I on a woman's faith rely—
Unsteady as the sea ?
Not hard the task her love to lure,
My confidence is more secure ;
No tempter, trust me, dares to earn
The vengeance of the Lord Saverne."

"Right, lord, the fool your scorn deserves,"
The huntsman then replies—
"Who, to the lady whom he serves,
Presumptuous! lifts his eyes;
And dares in love to rival thee,
Forgetful of his low degree."
"What!" cries the count, with passion pale,
"Lives, then, the hero of thy tale?"

"Yes, faith! what every tongue repeats,
Shall I from you conceal?
But—if you wish the tale suppress'd,
I now repent my zeal."
"Speak! slanderous villain, on your life,
Who dares to trifle with my wife?"
Exclaim'd the count with burning rage:
"Well, then, I hinted at the fair-hair'd page.

"No common form is his, I own,"
He added with deep art,
While every word a dagger plants
Within his master's heart;
"And have you ne'er observed, my lord,
How often at the festive board,
He leaves yourself unserved, while there
He hangs upon your lady's chair?

"Behold the verses, sir, wherein
His passion is confess'd!"
"Confess'd?" "And, shameless, tempts to sin
Your lady's spotless breast:
The countess, all benevolence,
In pity veils the vile offence;
Would I had been less zealous here,
For what, my lord, have you to fear?"

Then to the neighbouring wood, with speed,
The count in frenzy rode,
Where, in the heated furnace vast,
The melted iron glow'd.
Here slaves attend the burning brand,
Early and late, with busy hand ;
The sparks fly out, the bellows groan,
As if to soften blocks of stone.

The powers of water and of fire
United here are found ;
The mill-wheel by the torrent swept,
Eternally rolls round.
The engines clatter night and day ;
In time the ponderous hammers play ;
And as the mighty blows descend,
E'en stubborn iron learns to bend.

And there to two attendants he
Thus issues his command :—
“ The *first* who, hither sent by me,
Shall thus of you demand :
' Have you obeyed my lord's desire ?'
Him cast into the furnace fire,
That nought but ashes may remain
Of him I hate, to blast my sight again.”

The savage pair rejoiced at this
With most inhuman glee ;
For callous was the heart within
Their breast, as steel could be.
And straight with horrid diligence,
They heat the furnace more intense ;
While with dark joy their bosoms heave,
The hapless victim panting to receive.

Then Robert to his comrade goes,
With false hypocrisy;
"Haste, comrade mine, and tarry not,
My lord would speak with thee."
My lord instructs the page—"Away
To yonder forge, ere sinks the day,
And of the servants there demand
If they have done their lord's command."

Obedient to his master's will,
The faithful page retires;
But hesitates, reflecting—"If
My lady aught requires?"
And to the countess straight he went—
"My lord hath to the foundry sent,
Say, lady, can I serve you too?
My first obedience still is due to you."

And thus the lady of Saverne
With accent mild replies,
"The holy mass I fain would hear,
But sick my infant lies.
Then go, my child, devoutly say
An orison for me to-day,
That when high Heaven absolveth you,
Your mistress may find mercy too."

And welcoming the glad behest,
His cheerful way he holds;
But scarce the village bound attains,
And open plain beholds,
When from the solemn church-bell rings
The hallow'd peal that daily brings
All sinners on the errand bent,
With welcome to the sacrament.

“ When Heaven invites, turn not away,
The church is holy ground.”
He speaks and enters, all was hush’d
The sacred walls around ;
For it was harvest-time, and now
Hot glow’d a-field the reaper’s brow ;
No ministrants as yet were there,
The holy service fitly to prepare.

Then soon resolving, he decides
The sacristan to play ;
In its own service, Heaven will sure
Forgive the short delay.
With *Cingulum*, and *Stole*, and *Vest*,
He hastens to array the priest ;
In order lays the sacred plate,
To heavenly uses consecrate.

And to the altar, when ’twas done,
He steps the priest before,
With holy volume wide display’d,
All ready to adore ;
Then kneels he to the left and right,
To every sign attentive quite,
And when the *Sanctus*’ words befell,
Three times he rang with silver bell.

And when the priest, now bending low,
Before the altar stands,
And God in presence holds to view,
In high uplifted hands—
The Sacristan proclaims the time
With punctual bell of holy chime,
Then all, devoutly kneeling, cross’d
And beat their breasts before the Heavenly Host.

Thus all with quick intelligence
He punctually performs,
For well had he been tutor'd in
The church's hallow'd forms.
Nor wearied he, till, at the close,
Till, at *Vobiscum Dominus*,
The priest turn'd round with holy mien,
And bless'd the crowd, and closed the heavenly scene.

Then all into its place again
In order he bestows ;
And, having cleansed the sacred fane,
With reverence withdraws.
And, hastening now with placid soul
To yonder huts, his destined goal,
Proceeds unto himself to say
Twelve *Pater Nosters* to beguile the way.

And when he sees the chimney smoke,
And sees the slaves look on,
He calls out—"What my lord hath spoke,
Ye forge-men, is it done?"
And, grinning, they compress their lips,
And point into the furnace-gorge—
"His doom is seal'd! the count will praise
His servants at the forge."

And with the answer to his lord
With rapid speed he hies;
When he perceives the page afar,
He scarce believes his eyes.
"Unhappy boy! whence comest thou?"
"Straight from the iron-foundry." "How?"
Then hast thou loiter'd on the way!"
"Sir, only while I stopped to pray:—

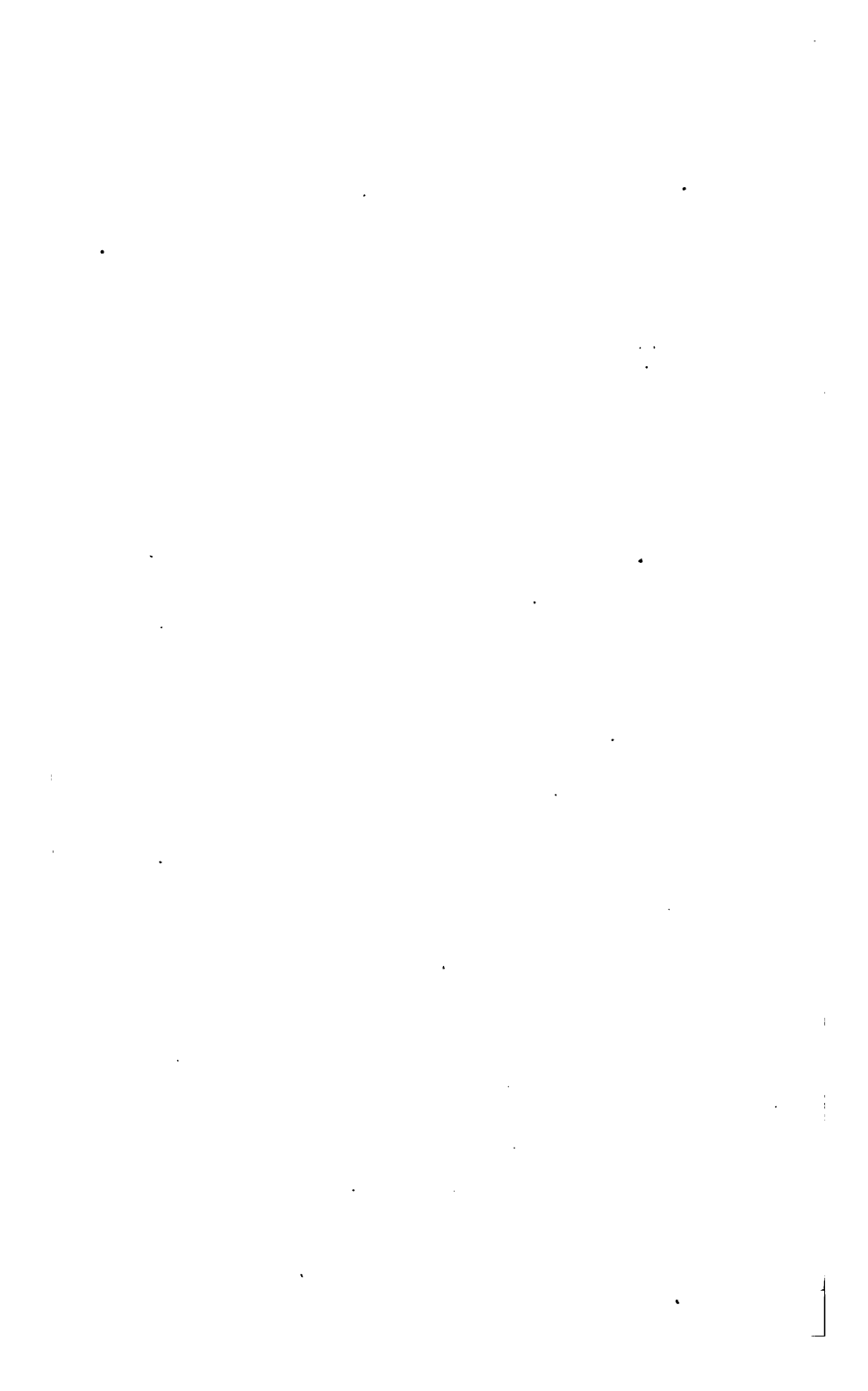
“ For, from your presence when, this morn—
 Forgive me—I retired,
First of the lady whom I serve
 I duteously inquired ;
The holy Mass she bid me hear,
And gladly did I lend an ear ;
Thrice have I told my rosary,
For her and your prosperity.”

In deep amazement ponder'd here
 The count, with speechless awe.
“ And, at the forge, what answer gave
 The slaves whom there you saw ? ”
“ Dark were their words : in doubtful phrase
 They pointed to the furnace-gorge,
And, laughing, said—‘ The count will praise
 His servants at the forge.’ ”

“ And *Robert !* ” cried the count, while thrill'd
 His blood in every vein :
“ Hast thou not met him on the way ?
 I sent him o'er the plain.”
“ Nor on the plain, nor country round,
One trace of Robert have I found.”
“ Well ! ” cried the count, with dread oppress'd,
“ God's justice here is manifest.”

And kindly, as he ne'er was wont,
 He takes the page's hand,
And brings him to the countess straight,
 Who nought did understand :—
“ This child is pure as angels are,
Henceforth I yield him to your care ;
For, though ill-counsel led our thoughts astray,
God and His Hosts have guarded him to-day ! ”

THE SONG OF THE BELL.



THE SONG OF THE BELL.

Vivos voco. Mortuos plango. Fulgura frango.

FIRM in the deep earth fasten'd well,
The clay-burnt model stands ;
Comrades ! to-day we cast the Bell,
Prepare your ready hands.

Hot from the brow
Must the sweat-drops flow,
The work shall show the master's skill,
But blest or not—is Heaven's will !

The work we seriously prepare—
A serious word may well beguile ;
When prudent converse mingles there,
Then labour loses half its toil.
So let us now with care revise
The great results of our weak art :
The bad man we must needs despise,
Who acts, but never thinks his part.
This is the privilege of our race,
For this was understanding ours,
That in our bosom we may trace
A reason for our manual powers.

Take the pine-tree's season'd stem,
But from damp let it be free,
That the close-imprison'd flame
May strike with more intensity.

Hither bring the tin !
Cast the copper in !
Each in due proportion take,
So the tough decoction make.

What in the trench's hollow pit
We form by fire's creative power,
Shall witness of us loudly yet,
High from the belfry's lofty tower.
Succeeding ages it shall hail,
And move the ears of many men ;
With the afflicted it shall wail,
And join devotion's holy strain.
Whate'er in changeful Fate's decree
Affects mankind in after time,
With edifying sound shall be
Proclaim'd on its metallic chime.

Ha ! white bubbles 'gin to rise—
Well, the masses now are fused ;
Add the needful alkalies,
So the cast is best produced.
From scum, too, free
Must the mixture be,
That from metal pure and clear,
A full clear tone may strike the ear.

For with a glad and festive peal
The new-born infant it shall hail,
On life's first journey as he goes,
In slumber while his limbs repose.

For him the womb of time conceals
Life's brighter lot—life's darker ills ;
Maternal fondness watches o'er
His golden morning's happy hour.

Swift as an arrow years fly on !
The boy forsakes the maiden's side,
And hastens o'er the world to roam ;
At length his wearied footsteps guide
The stranger to his father's home.
And, blooming in the pride of youth,
Like some bright vision from the skies,
With looks of innocence and truth,
The bashful virgin greets his eyes.
A nameless longing 'gins to fill
His breast—alone he wanders then :
Tears often from his eyes distil,
He shuns the boisterous haunts of men ;
Her footsteps, blushing, he pursues,
Thrice happy does her greeting prove,
The fairest flowers the fields produce,
Are gather'd to adorn his love.
Oh ! tender longing ! soft delight !
Bright season of our early love !
All Heaven seems display'd to sight ;
The heart is bathed in joys above !
Oh, that it e'er should cease to charm,
The season of love's first alarm !

How the pipes begin to brown !
This little staff will I dip in ;
If glazed the surface then is shown,
The cast may shortly now begin.
Comrades, now make haste,
Let us prove the cast ;

If the brittle and the strong,
A happy union promise long.

For where the strong and tender join,
Where power and weakness can combine,
A happy tone will then ensue;
Ye, therefore, who would join for aye,
Prove first if heart and heart agree;
Brief is the rapture—long the rue.
The virgin garland sparkles bright
In the bridal tresses fair,
When the clear church-bells invite
The happy festival to share.
Ah ! life's fairest festival
Also ends life's summer-day ;
With the girdle, with the veil,
The sweet illusion flies away !
Passion subsides ;
Love must not go.
The blossom fades ;
The fruit must grow.
The man must abroad
Into active life,
Where foes are rife,
And must struggle and strive
All ways to live,
And by every means
Improve his gains.
At length abundance crowns his toil ;
His stores are fill'd from the fruitful soil,
And his spaces increase, and his house grows large.
And therein rules
The housewife chaste,
The children's mother,

And wisely shares
The house affairs;
The girls instructs,
And the boys corrects,
And her hands never rest
From the day's behest;
And increases the gains
With well-weigh'd pains;
And with fragrant treasure her store-room fills,
And winds the thread round the purring wheels;
And her polish'd presses all are full,
With the snowy linen and shining wool;
And with fair outside she still invests
The solid good—and never rests.

And the father proudly stands,
Where his house the view commands,
And his flourishing stock counts o'er;
He sees his piles of timber fell'd,
And his waving corn in the fruitful field,
And his granaries bent with store.
And exulting, aloud he cries,
“ Firm as the earth's foundation lies,
Against fate am I secure,
And my fortune must needs endure;”
But—with the powers of destiny
No lasting compact there can be,
And evil strides apace !

Now the cast may be begun,
Fairly is the sample broken;
But, before we let it run,
Let a pious word be spoken.

Let the stopper go!
Heaven preserve the house from woe!
Reeking in the arch's bow,
See the fire-brown orrent flow!

Beneficent is fire's might,
When man controls its power aright;
And all that human art can do,
To this great element is due.
But formidable it becomes,
When it the mastery assumes,
And, uninvited, enters in,
Free Nature's daughter on the scene.
Woe! when, independent grown,
Increasing spite of all command,
Through the thickly-peopled town
She hurls the all-consuming brand;
For the elements still frown
On the work of human hand:
From the clouds
Blessings pour,
Teems the shower:
From the clouds,
Uncertain where,
Lightnings glare.
Hark! dost hear the tempest wail
From the turret?—that is hail!
Red as blood
The sky becomes;
That is not the light of day!
How the people
Leave their homes,
Choking up the steaming way
See! the fiery column rise,

Crackling, in the lurid skies—
Growing, on the wind it flies :
Like an oven, burning clear,
Glows the heated atmosphere !
Pillars tumble,
Posts give way,
Children tremble,
Mothers stray ;
Windows quiver,
Cattle shiver—
All is bustle, haste, and flight,
Clear as noonday is the night !
Through the long-extended chain
Of human hands, as if for gain,
Flies the bucket ; while in showers
The watery arch its billows pours.
Hark ! the raging tempest howls,
Seeking for the flame it comes ;
In the corn's parch'd ears it falls,
In the granary's dry rooms,
In the timber's season'd beams ;
And, as if the solid globe
It threaten'd in its flight to bear,
Ever raging, still it grows
Gigantic in the lurid air !
Hope-bereft,
Man contends with Heaven no more ;
Idly wondering, he beholds
The wreck of all his cherish'd store.

Burnt and bare
The homestead lies,
The wild storm's prize.
In the empty window-frames
Horror reigns ;

And the clouds of Heaven stare
On the ruins—
High in air !

One last look
Towards the wreck
Of all his wealth
The man sends back,
Then cheerful takes his staff in hand :
Whatever ill the fire has done,
One comfort he has still in store ;
He reckons all his dear ones o'er,
And see, not one dear head is gone !

Now the metal in the clay
Rests happily ; the mould is fill'd.
Will it fairly face the day,
And profit for our labour yield ?
Should our efforts fail ?
Should it burst the pale ?
Ah ! perhaps, while yet we speak,
Evil may be pacing quick.

To the dark womb of holy earth
We trust the produce of our skill,
The sower trusts his seed ;
And hopes for it a second birth,
If blest by Heaven's holy will.
More precious seed we also trust,
With sorrow, to the grassy tomb ;
And hope that, one day, from the dust
'T will blossom to a brighter doom.

From the dome,
Deep and long,
Peals the Bell

Funeral song!

Its strokes of mourning sadly toll
The requiem of a 'parted soul!

Ah! 'tis the wife, the cherish'd one—
Ah! the tender mother's gone—
By the Prince of Shadows torn
From her husband's arms away;
From the children she had borne
Blooming on a brighter day,
When she saw them sweetly rest
On her fond maternal breast.
Now for ever are dissolv'd
All the fond domestic ties;
She who once the house controll'd
In a land of shadows lies.
Gone is now the house's head,
Her gentle rule has pass'd away;
O'er her orphans, in her stead,
The love-lorn stranger now shall sway.

Now, until the Bell be cool,
From our labours rest awhile;
Free as bird from all control,
Each himself the time beguile.

When the stars appear,
From all duty clear,
The 'prentice hails the vesper chime:
The master has no leisure time.

In the distant forest chase,
As the night begins to gloom,
The weary traveller mends his pace,
Hastening to his cottage-home.
Bleating flocks forsake the hill,



And the broad-brow'd polish'd herds
Of lowing cattle haste to fill
Their wonted stalls.
Heavy laden, from the field
The corn-piled waggon totters in.
Bright with variegated leaves,
On the sheaves
The garland lies ;
And the youthful reapers all
Hasten to the rural ball.
Street and market now are still,
Round the candle's social flame
Homely circles gather in ;
And the ponderous city gate
Closes, jarring, for the night.
Now the world is reft of light ;
But the peaceful citizen
Fears no evil from the night,
Which wakes the bad man from his den ;
For the watchful eye of law
Wakes with salutary awe.

Holy order ! rich in blessing !
Heaven's own child !
Ruling with dominion mild ;
Founder of the city's plan,
Who from pathless deserts wild
Call'd the unsocial savage man ;
Enter'd first his cheerless haunts,
Taught him to supply his wants,
And, first of impulses, impress'd
The love of country in his breast !

A thousand active hands combine
The social edifice to join,

And in animated strife
Man's best powers are brought to life.
Master stirs, and workmen toil,
Basking under Freedom's smile ;
Each, contented, may defy
The slander of his enemy.
Work adorns the citizen ;
Toil a blessing still commands ;
Dignity adorns the king,
Us the labour of our hands.

Heavenly concord !
Holy peace !
Hover, hover
Kindly o'er our native town.
Never may we see the day
When the savage hordes of war
Through this valley spread dismay ;
When the sky, serenely mild,
Which with evening's rosy hue
Softly beams,
With the conflagration wild
Of towns and cities,
Frightful gleams !

Now the mould let us destroy—
Its purpose it has served the while—
Till we feast both heart and eye
On our hands' successful toil.
Sway the hammer, sway !
Till the crust gives way !
When the Bell is fit to rise,
Then the mould in pieces flies.

The master may destroy the mould
With prudence and with certainty ;

But woe! when, raging uncontroll'd,
The burning ore itself makes free!
Blind-raging, with the thunder's note,
It blows the bursting house in air;
And, like a boiling crater's throat,
Destruction vomits everywhere.
When powers untutor'd senseless strive,
No well-form'd image e'er can thrive;
When people seek themselves to free,
Successful they can never be.

Woe! when in a city's lap
The fuel of rebellion lies;
The people from its fetters starts,
And madly to resistance flies;
Then howls the desecrated Bell
With fearful and discordant jar,
And, meant of peaceful things to tell,
Gives signal for revolt and war.

"Freedom and equality!"
Such is now the rallying cry;
The peaceful burgess flies to arms—
The streets, the public halls are full,
And ruffian bands the town patrol.
Then women to hyenas turn,
And drive their horrid jests with woe;
Still throbbing, with a panther's teeth,
They tear the entrails of their foe.
Nought more is sacred, rent away
Are all restraints of pious awe;
The good man to the bad gives way,
And every vice defies the law.
'Tis dangerous in a lion's lair,
Destructive may the tiger's be,
But horrors there can none compare

With man from all restraint set free.
Woe ! then, to him who lends the torch
Of freedom to the ever-blind ;
For him it sheds no ray of light,
But, powerful only to ignite,
Of towns and cities fires the train,
And desolates the blacken'd plain.

Heaven the work has prosper'd well ;
See how, like a golden gem,
Bright and polish'd from the shell,
The metal kernel darts its beam.
From the garland to the crown
It sparkles brightly in the sun ;
And the polish'd crest and shield
Their tribute to the master yield.

Come in ! come in !
Companions all, close the ring ;
The Bell must have its christening—
CONCORDIA shall its name be call'd ;
May it the congregations join
In bonds of harmony divine !

And this henceforth its office be,
Its purpose and its destiny :
High o'er this scene of suffering,
Let it, in Heaven's azure tent,
The neighbour of the thunder swing,
And touch the starry firmament :
So let it seem a voice above,
Like the bright planets' dazzling throng,
Which praise their Maker as they move,
And lead the wreath-crown'd year along.
Let serious and eternal things
Alone its metal mouth employ ;

And hourly, as its hammer swings,
Touch Time's swift pinions as they fly.
Lending a tongue to destiny,
Itself unfeeling joy or pain,
Let its dull stroke accompany
Life's varying and eventful train ;
And as the sound at length decays,
Which it sends forth, upon the ear,
So let it teach that nothing stays—
That all is transitory here !

Now then, comrades all, attend :
The Bell into its station weigh :
To the sky let it ascend—
The region of its destiny.
Pull, then, pull away !
It moves—begins to sway :
May it bring our city joy—
PEACE its earliest notes employ !

PEGASUS IN HARNESS.



PEGASUS IN HARNESS.

ONCE at a famous cattle-fair
In the Haymarket—or elsewhere—
Where other things, both young and old,
For merchandise are bought and sold,
A hungry poet, thin and pale,
Offered the Muses' horse for sale.

Clear neighed the Hippogryph, and stood
In most majestic attitude ;
And every passer by agreed,
It was a noble beast indeed ;
Pity, that hateful pair of wings
Its beauty into question brings !

'Twould ornament the first of teams,
The breed, they say, is very rare,
(And very rare indeed it seems,)
But who goes coaching through the air ?
And so, whate'er its merits be,
Each keeps him from the purchase free.
At length a farmer ventures near :
" The wings," said he, "are useless gear ;
But can be easily propp'd or bound,
The horse will then be useful found,
So, faith ! I'll venture twenty pound."
The owner, too well pleased to sell
His bargain, answered, " It is well—
A word's enough, no more's to say."
And Hodge trots briskly with his prize away.

Now harnessed to a vulgar cart
The noble beast must act his part ;
But scarcely has he felt its weight,
When off at a most fearful rate
He gallops, swifter than the wind,
Longing his native air to find ;
And on a precipice's edge
Upsets the cart in a majestic rage.
Ay, ay, thinks Hodge, 'tis very plain,
We must not trust thee with the wain ;
Experience only makes us thrive ;
To-morrow I have folks to drive,
And surely I may yoke the beast
As leader of the team at least—
Yes, and the lively crab shall do,
A lucky thought ! the work of two.

At the commencement all went well,
The wheeler's trot behind gave life
To the light-pinioned Hippogryph,

And faster far than I can tell,
The carriage flew. But what befell ?
Still fixing on the clouds his gaze,
And, unaccustomed all to beat
The hard road with his unshod feet,
He quits the wheels' securer trace,
And, true to nature, gallops o'er
Ploughed field and pasture, marsh and moor ;
A like rage seizes all the team,
In vain the travellers pull and scream,
Bridle and voice alike are vain,
Nought can the equipage restrain,
Till on a mountain's top at last,
Well smashed and shaken, it stands fast.

There's something not quite right in this !
Cries Hodge, with very rueful phiz.
'Tis plain that so we shan't succeed ;
But let us now with patience try,
If work and very little feed
Don't tame the mad-cap by-and-bye.
The experiment at once is made.
Before three days are over head,
The beautiful and gallant beast
Is wasted to a very shade.
Cries Hodge, " I've found the way at last,
Make haste, my friends, and yoke it now,
With my best bullock to the plough."

No sooner said than done. For lo !
A team as laughable as new—
Winged horse and bullock both put-to !
Ill-pleased the Griffin paces on,
And strains each sinew to attain
His former freedom ; but in vain.

His neighbour paces slow and sure,
And Phœbus' steed must e'en endure
The ignominy and disgrace
Of stepping to a bullock's pace,
Till now, by long resistance worn,
His strength in every limb gives way ;
And the proud horse, with anguish torn,
Falls to the ground, and rolls him in the clay.

Unlucky beast ! cries Hodge, at last
To passion roused, while thick and fast
He plied poor Pegasus with blows ;
So thou art e'en too bad for tilling,
And I've been cheated by some villain—
Would I could catch him by the nose !

While with his whip poor Hodge, enraged,
Continued actively engaged,
A comely-featured youth passed by,
Good humour sparkling in his eye.
A lute resounded in his hand,
While through his hair a golden band
Twined gracefully. " How now, my friend ?"
While yet at distance, he exclaimed,
" What kind of team have you got there ?
A bird and bullock—what a pair !
Lend me your horse, and let me try
A proof of his ability ;
I promise, you shall see him soar,
As you have ne'er seen horse before.

The Hippogryph is soon released,
While on his back the smiling youth
Vaults nimbly. And the noble beast,
Instead of harness most uncouth,

No sooner feels the master's weight,
 Than, champing proudly on the bit,
 While lightning sparkles in his eyes,
 No more the same, ascends the skies,
 A royal, glorious, heavenly thing ;
 And spreading all his pride of wing,
 Soars upward in majestic flight,
 Till lost in Heaven's azure light.

THE END.

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